

REQUESTS FOR RESEARCH OR STATISTICAL INFORMATION

The Tax Department Policy Section receives many requests for data, statistical summary information, or tax research. Many of the requests can be satisfied from standard reports published periodically by the Department and posted to its web site. Procedures for satisfying requests for existing records and documents are addressed in Title 1, Chapter 5, Subchapter 3, Access to Public Records. Disclosure of confidential tax information is governed by Title 32, §3102.

To the extent a request is made for information that does not exist as a record, there is no obligation under Vermont's Access to Public Records law to undertake research or create a new document or file. However, in some cases the standard reports do not meet the needs of the requestor. The Department is committed to meeting the needs of the public to the extent possible within time and resource constraints. The following guidelines outline the prioritization of requests and the conditions under which the Department will undertake special processing.

1. Requests from the Governor's office or the Secretary of Administration will be given top priority.
2. Research and data requests by the Joint Fiscal Office or legislative committees will be high priority.
3. Requests from current vendors, i.e., Economic Policy Resources and Economic and Information Systems Consulting, will be given high priority if the request is in support of their forecasting duties, monthly revenue reports to the Governor, or legislative testimony.
4. Requests from other agencies or departments will be handled as quickly as possible, assuming the data required are either a simple variation on previous analyses or can be easily extracted and summarized from electronic Tax Department data.
5. Requests from municipal officers, if the request is in support of their statutory duties, will be handled as quickly as possible. Requests from individual legislators that involve issues of general importance to their district or to support future legislation will be handled as quickly as possible. Public officers that make requests for individual citizens will be handled on a time-available basis (see #6 and #7).
6. Requests from members of the public will be handled on a time-available basis, assuming the data required are either a simple variation on previous analyses or can be easily extracted and summarized from electronic Tax Department data. The Department will charge a fee for such requests, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 316(d) and detailed in the Uniform Schedule of Public Record Charges for State Agencies (<http://vermont-archives.org/records/access/fees.html>).

Requests from the public that require considerable research or manipulation of the data will be undertaken only if time is available and the results would be useful for tax-related state business in the future. These requests are also subject to a fee, as specified above.